THE SECRETARY OF STATE 7711998

WASHINGTON

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May 23, 1977

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

From: Cyrus Vance

Subject: U.S. Policy on Human Rights

This memorandum (1) provides a brief status report on measures being taken here to assure that our human rights policy is effectively implemented and (2) requests that you approve a means for interagency coordination on human rights.

1. To implement our human rights policy, we have organized a broadscale effort involving all relevant bureaus of the Department as well as all U.S. posts abroad. As part of this program, we have directed the following:

-- Specific proposed courses of action with respect to each country, with consideration to be given to each of the available approaches to encourage recognition of human rights.

-- Strategy papers and action plans on how best to use security assistance, bilateral economic aid, and U.S. participation in international financial institutions to promote human rights.

-- Action plans on more creative use of public diplomacy (e.g., through USIA's efforts) to further human rights.

-- Action plans for using multilateral institutions to promote human rights.

-- More effective cooperation with the Hill and the growing number of human rights lobbies.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 12/23/83
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In addition, I have directed circulation throughout the Department and to all U.S. posts abroad of important statements on human rights made by you and senior Administration officials, including of course the Law Day speech. I have also appointed Warren Christopher as Chairman of the Department's Human Rights Coordinating Group which oversees all major human rights decisions within the State Department, AID and USIA.

2. To enlist fullest possible support for our human rights policy, coordination throughout the Executive Branch is necessary. Many decisions in this area require collaboration with, for example, the Department of Defense, the Treasury, and the National Security Council.

In one particular area -- decision-making on human rights issues as they relate to foreign assistance -- interdepartmental coordination is already being provided by an interagency group formed pursuant to an NSC memorandum of April 1. That memo specified that the group should be chaired by my representative, and earlier this month I designated Warren Christopher as Chairman.

I believe that the coordination should now be broadened to include Executive Branch efforts on all fronts. The State Department is prepared to take the lead, if you agree.

RECOMMENDATION

That you direct the State Department to coordinate Executive Branch efforts affecting the promotion of human rights abroad.

APPROVE _____ DISAPPROVE _____

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

7711998

May 3, 1977

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY

FROM: Warren Christopher W.C.

SUBJECT: U.S. Policy on Human Rights: Actions Being Taken

In light of your Law Day statement on our human rights policy, I have taken or am taking the steps described below to insure that our policy is implemented in the full range of U.S. diplomatic efforts:

1. Communication of Policy to All Posts

Your Law Day speech has been dispatched to all U.S. consular and diplomatic posts along with a cable emphasizing the importance of the speech and directing that it be disseminated as widely as possible. This will be followed by a cable to all posts providing illustrative "questions and answers" on human rights and other background materials. The cable also requests all posts to provide specific recommendations to the Department on how the U.S. can help promote human rights in the host country or work with the host country to further human rights elsewhere.

2. Action with Respect to Individual Countries

While I believe we should continue to resist the idea of a country "hit list", we will inevitably focus on some nations more than others. To help determine where we should concentrate our efforts, I am asking that all regional assistant secretaries propose specific courses of action for each country. Those papers are to incorporate suggestions solicited from the field, and I have asked that they pay particular attention to proposing positive ways to foster human rights.

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I am also planning to convene the Human Rights Coordinating Group (HRCG), which you established earlier this year and which I chair, to review action for several countries needing prompt attention.

3. Coordination of Policy

While State Department efforts will be crucial in implementing our human rights policy, coordination throughout the Executive Branch is obviously necessary to make the policy as effective as possible. Many decisions in this area require collaboration with, for example, the Department of Defense, the Treasury, and the National Security Council.

In one particular area -- decision-making on human rights issues as they relate to foreign assistance -- interdepartmental coordination is already being provided by an interagency group formed pursuant to an NSC memorandum of April 1. That memo specified that the group should be chaired by your representative, and earlier this month you designated me as Chairman.

Now, however, coordination of Executive Branch human rights efforts on all fronts is needed to build public confidence in the coherence of our overall policy and assure that we pace our human rights statements and actions in a way most likely to promote human rights and other comparably important U.S. interests. I believe that the State Department should take the lead in the coordination effort, and I am attaching (Tab 1) a brief memorandum to the President to that effect.

With respect to coordination within the State Department itself, I:

a. am trying to expedite Patt Derian's confirmation as Coordinator for Human Rights;

b. have approved a five-position expansion of D/HA (with attendant extension of office space);

c. have asked D/HA to assure that the Foreign Service Institute increase its efforts to stress human rights as a factor in U.S. foreign policy;

d. am expanding the role of our Human Rights Coordinating Committee -- it will meet at least once a month and a smaller core group -- to include D/HA, P, C, IO, H, L, S/P or others as appropriate -- will be available to meet, at Assistant Secretary level, for fast-action items.

e. have asked D/HA to prepare a monthly status report on items proposed in this memorandum and subseqeunt initiatives on human rights, the report to be sent through my office for your reference by the first day of each month.

4. Economic Assistance

a. With respect to bilateral programs, I am:

(i) asking the AID Administrator to expand AID's "New Initiatives in Human Rights" program with the first step being formal presentation of an action plan to our Coordinating Committee;

(ii) asking D/HA, in consultation with AID, to develop ways to increase consultations on human rights with other industrial nations; one end product of this effort will be a cable to the field, with contributions from EUR and EA, indicating how the U.S. plans to work with the other industrial democracies to further human rights;

(iii) asking AID and IO, with clearance from D/HA and S/P, to draw up a status report and action plan to foster women's rights.

b. With respect to multilateral programs, I am:

(i) asking EB to provide all relevant members of our Coordinating Committee (D/HA, E, ARA, H, L, and S/P) with notice of proposed U.S. decisions on IFI loans and actions that raise Harkin Amendment issues in particular or human rights issues in general, such notice to be provided as far in advance of the time for decision as possible and to be accompanied by a paper fully setting forth both sides of the issue and alerting me to any inconsistency in State-Treasury-NSC positions;

(ii) asking EB to provide a policy paper on how we ought to implement our human rights policy through the IFI's.

(iii) asking H to give special attention to the IFI's in formulating its overall Congressional human rights strategy (see below).

5. Security Assistance

I am asking PM and T -- with assistance from D/HA, H, and S/P -- to consider, modify where appropriate, and submit for review by our Coordinating Committee procedural and substantive guidelines for effectively bringing to bear human rights considerations in our security assistance programs.

6. Cooperation with the Congress

Our strategy for Congressional relations on the human rights question need not be so much a "strategy" as an attitude. That attitude should start and end with the determination to work with the Congress. Accordingly, I am:

a. asking H and D/HA to insure that the following items of immediate concern on the Hill figure prominently in the Department's cooperation with Congress:

(i) promotion of human rights through the IFI's;

(ii) security assistance;

(iii) ratification of UN human rights covenants and conventions, as set forth in the President's March 17 UN speech;

[redacted] A-1 A5

b. asking H and D/HA, as a complement to our efforts with the Congress, to meet and talk on a regular basis with representatives of the more important human rights organizations in town, including the new Washington chapter of Amnesty International, the Washington Office for Latin America, the National Catholic Conference, B'nai B'rith, and the Coalition for a New Foreign Military Policy.

7. Multilateral Diplomacy

a. The United Nations

I am asking IO to develop an "Agenda for US Action on Human Rights at the United Nations", to encompass consideration of the following:

(i) determining before the convening of each new session of the General Assembly and each major UN conference the priority human rights issues for special US attention.

(ii) consulting early and often with close allies and, when possible, with non-aligned and third world nations, to identify human rights issues of shared concern and forge appropriate coalitions;

(iii) seeking ways to eliminate the racism-zionism issue, and trying to assure even-handed study and statements on country and area human rights situations so that not just a few targets (such as Chile, Israel, and South Africa) are singled out;

(iv) following up on the President's proposals for strengthening the HRC by more frequent meetings, by returning the Commission to New York, and by increasing its mandate with the appointment of a UN Human Rights Commissioner, and also to take steps to preserve the Commission's procedures for dealing with private complaints on human rights;

(v) selecting one of the USUN ambassadors as US Representative to the HRC as a means of promoting continuity in US statements and actions at the HRC, ECOSOC, and the General Assembly and providing a known full-time US spokesperson at the HRC.

b. The Organization of American States (OAS)

ARA has tendered the following proposals designed to strengthen the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, and I have asked them to prepare these proposals for presentation to our Coordinating Committee:

(i) Budget increase: seek substantially increased OAS funding of the IAHRC (present funding is approximately $436,000), OAS funding being preferable to direct US contributions;

(ii) Program of annual visits: schedule an annual visit by a member-or-staff investigating team to every OAS member country except those as to which there are few if any human rights complaints;

(iii) Annual debate on human rights situations: push strongly for annual debate in appropriate OAS bodies, on the human rights situation in member countries, taking care to acknowledge improvements as well as denounce violations;

(iv) Educational programs: promote and elaborate the program of Inter-American education in the human rights area which we plan to propose at the next meeting of the Inter-American Education, Science, and Cultural Council;

(v) Attention to terrorism: support broadening the mandate of the IAHRC to investigate the link between abuses of human rights and terrorism;

I am also asking ARA to prepare papers on these pending questions: Should the State Department submit information concerning violations to the IAHRC? If the OAS threatens to narrow the mandate of the Commission, or to emasculate it by other means, should the US counter, either by threatening to reduce its budgetary contributions or to withdraw from the Organization?

8. Improving U.S. Performance and Defense of Americans' Rights

I am asking D/HA -- assisted by SCA, H, L, S/P, and other concerned bureaus -- to follow and support the Department's efforts in the following areas:

a. liberalizing our visa policy;

b. encouraging legislation and necessary administrative action to expand our refugee and asylum policies

in order to permit entry into the United States of more victims of repressive regimes;

c. strengthening our representations on behalf of American citizens adversely affected by repressive measures in foreign countries.

9. Public Diplomacy

I have called for the preparation of human rights action plans by USIA, CU, and PA for review by our Coordinating Committee; the PA plan will include, inter alia, proposals to help senior-level officials of the Administration explain US policy on human rights, and preparation of materials for mailing to opinion leaders and groups and for use by State Department employees speaking throughout the United States.

10. Recommendation for Your Action

On the premise that the foregoing program is agreeable to you, I recommend that you sign the memorandum at Tab 1.

APPROVE 1/23 DISAPPROVE

Attachment:

Tab 1 - Memorandum from you to the President.